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**COLOMBIA EXTRADITES LEADER OF COLOMBIAN TERRORIST  
ORGANIZATION TO THE UNITED STATES  
ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING CHARGES**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOHN P. GILBRIDE, Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), announced today the successful extradition of DIEGO FERNANDO MURILLO-BEJARANO, a/k/a "Don Berna," a/k/a "Don Bernardo," a/k/a "Adolfo Paz," the top leader of the Autodefensas Unidas De Colombia ("AUC"), a former Colombian paramilitary organization designated by the United States Department of State as a foreign terrorist organization.

MURILLO-BEJARANO, who faces charges in the Southern District of New York that he conspired to import thousands of kilograms of cocaine into the United States, and that he conspired to launder the proceeds of drug trafficking, is expected to be arraigned tomorrow in Manhattan federal court. According to a previously-unsealed Indictment in this case:

The AUC was a paramilitary organization based in Colombia which is engaged in warfare with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia ("FARC"), Colombia's main guerilla group. To support its terrorist paramilitary activities and to enrich its leaders, the AUC was involved in narcotics trafficking, and was responsible for the importation of multi-ton quantities of cocaine into the United States. The AUC was involved in overseeing the transportation of cocaine by sea -- on board speedboats and cargo vessels -- from Colombia to the United States, either directly or through third countries.

MURILLO-BEJARANO held the title of Inspector General of the AUC, but was the de facto leader of the organization, in charge of its narcotics-trafficking activities, including all of its cocaine transportation and financial operations. MURILLO-BEJARANO maintained his power in the AUC in part from the proceeds of his drug-trafficking activities.

The cocaine shipped to the United States by the AUC generated millions of dollars in New York and other U.S. cities. At the direction of individuals working under the supervision of MURILLO-BEJARANO's organization, these sums were placed in bags or suitcases and exchanged at pre-arranged locations. The purpose of these transfers was to allow the conspiracy to repatriate narcotics proceeds to Colombia while concealing the illicit nature of the funds.

Colombian authorities, pursuant to a request for a provisional arrest from the United States, arrested MURILLO-BEJARANO in Colombia on May 27, 2005. As part of the extradition request, the United States has provided assurances to the government of Colombia that it will not seek a life sentence for the defendant, but instead will ask for a prison term of years.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the DEA's New York Drug Enforcement Task Force -- which includes agents and officers of the DEA, the New York City Police Department and the New York State Police -- and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as the DEA's Colombia and Mexico Offices, the United States Marshals Service, the Colombian National Police, and the Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad for their assistance in the case.

"The extradition of this alleged leader of a designated terrorist organization responsible for sending ton quantities of cocaine to the United States is an important advance in our ongoing effort to investigate, extradite, and prosecute the world's most powerful and dangerous drug lords," said Mr. GARCIA. "We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners in Colombia to ensure that leaders of narco-terrorist organizations who target the United States are brought to justice."

Mr. GILBRIDE stated, "With this arrest, Diego Fernando Murillo-Bejarano, aka 'Don Berna,' enjoys the same fate as some of the world's most infamous drug lords. Global law enforcement has once again joined forces to bring to justice those allegedly responsible for bringing massive amounts of illegal drugs to the streets of the U.S."

The case is being prosecuted by the Office's International Narcotics Trafficking Unit. Assistant United

States Attorneys ERIC SNYDER and GURUANJAN SAHNI are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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